



Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office

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The Ocean Policy Unit (Legal Directorate) of the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) presents its compliments to the Embassy of the United States of America, and has the honour to refer to the court proceedings at the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia concerning the proposed salvage of the Marconi wireless set from inside the RMS Titanic.

The wreck of the Titanic is of unique historic significance and symbolic value and international interest and is the final resting place of those on board who lost their lives, including many British citizens.

It is important therefore to ensure the protection of this site and its artefacts for present and future generations.

The governments of the USA and the UK have agreed through treaty (Agreement Concerning the Shipwrecked Vessel RMS Titanic) that the most effective way to ensure such protection is through *in situ* preservation, unless otherwise justified by educational, scientific or cultural interests, including the need to protect the integrity of RMS Titanic and/or its artefacts from a significant threat.

In particular, the USA and the UK have agreed that they will take the necessary measures, in respect of their respective nationals and of vessels flying their respective flags, to regulate entry into the hull sections of RMS Titanic through a system of project authorisations.

We consider such a system of project authorisations to be central to the effective protection of RMS Titanic and that it would be contrary to the treaty for a party to permit entry into the hull sections of RMS Titanic without proper authorisation through such a system.

The UK will continue to take a keen interest in ongoing developments in legal proceedings in the US, and the fulfilment of the US's international obligations under the Titanic Agreement.

The Ocean Policy Unit (Legal Directorate) of the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Embassy of the United States of America the assurances of its highest consideration.



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